

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of the claims replaces all earlier listings and all earlier versions.

1. - 17. (Cancelled).

18. (New) A method for controlling an image processing system having a plurality of devices connected with each other via a communication path including a plurality of channels, said method comprising:

a reserving step, of reserving a plurality of channels;

a first communicating step, of storing read image data to a hard disk storage and communicating the image data stored in the hard disk storage using a part of the plurality of channels;

a second communicating step, of, without storing the read image data to the hard disk storage, communicating the read image data using a part of the plurality of channels, wherein the number of channels used in the second communicating step exceeds the number of channels used in said first communicating step;

a receiving step, of receiving a channel request; and

a step of, when the channel request is received in said receiving step upon communicating in said second communicating step, re-assigning a part of unused channels in the plurality of channels if a number of requested channels does not exceed the number of unused channels, and communicating in said first communication step so as to increase a

number of channels to be used for re-assigning of channels if a number of the requested channels exceeds the number of unused channels,

wherein the image data is communicated in either said first communicating step or said second communicating step.

19. (New) A method for controlling an image processing system having a plurality of devices connected with each other via a communication path including a plurality of channels, said method comprising:

a reserving step, of reserving a plurality of channels;

a first communicating step, of reducing read image data and communicating the reduced image data using a part of the plurality of channels;

a second communicating step, of, without reducing the read image data, communicating the read image data using a part of the plurality of channels, wherein the number of channels used in the second communicating step exceeds the number of channels used in said first communicating step;

a receiving step, of receiving a channel request; and

a step of, when the channel request is received in said receiving step upon communicating in said second communicating step, re-assigning a part of unused channels in the plurality of channels if a number of requested channels does not exceed the number of unused channels, and communicating in said first communication step so as to increase a number of channels to be used for re-assigning of channels if a number of the requested channels exceeds the number of unused channels,

wherein the image data is communicated in either said first communicating step or said second communicating step.

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20. (New) A method for controlling an image processing system having a plurality of devices connected with each other via a communication path including a plurality of channels, said method comprising:

a reserving step, of reserving a plurality of channels;

a first communicating step, of compressing read image data and communicating the compressed image data using a part of the plurality of channels;

a second communicating step, of, without compressing the read image data, communicating the read image data using a part of the plurality of channels, wherein the number of channels used in the second communicating step exceeds the number of channels used in said first communicating step;

a receiving step, of receiving a channel request; and

a step of, when the channel request is received in said receiving step upon communicating in said second communicating step, re-assigning a part of unused channels in the plurality of channels if a number of requested channels does not exceed the number of unused channels, and communicating in said first communication step so as to increase a number of channels to be used for re-assigning of channels if a number of the requested channels exceeds the number of unused channels,

wherein the image data is communicated in either said first communicating step or said second communicating step.

21. (New) A method for controlling an image processing system having a plurality of devices connected with each other via a serial bus, said method comprising:

- an obtaining step, of obtaining a channel on the serial bus;
- a changing step, of changing an operation mode of at least one of the plurality of devices in accordance with a channel obtained in said obtaining step; and
- a transmitting step, of isochronously transmitting image data using a channel obtained in said obtaining step.

22. (New) A method for controlling an image processing system having a plurality of devices connected with each other via a serial bus, said method comprising:

- an obtaining step, of obtaining a channel on the serial bus;
- a changing step, of changing an operation mode of one of the plurality of devices in accordance with a channel obtained in said obtaining step; and
- a transmitting step, of isochronously transmitting image data from one of the plurality of devices to the other of the plurality of devices using a channel obtained in said obtaining step.

23. (New) A method for controlling an image processing system having a plurality of devices connected with each other via a serial bus, said method comprising:

- an obtaining step, of obtaining a channel on the serial bus;
- a changing step, of changing an operation mode of one of the plurality of devices in accordance with a channel obtained in said obtaining step; and

a transmitting step, of isochronously transmitting image data to one of the plurality of devices using a channel obtained in said obtaining step.